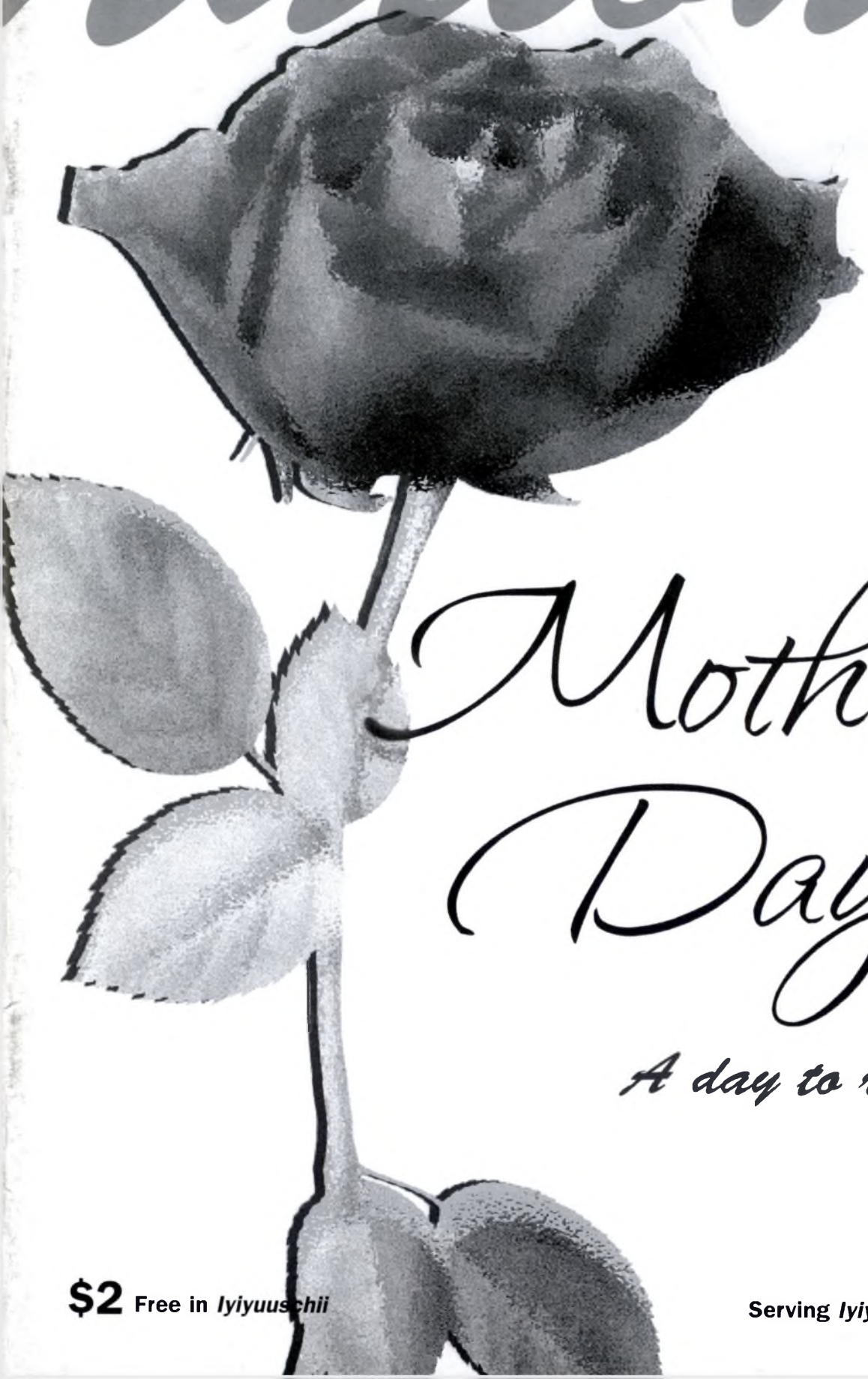
Nation

Volume 7, No. 13 • May 19, 2000



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How First Nations Leaders Can Restore First Nation Citizens and the Public's Confidence in Governance

By James Wastasecoot

A few weeks ago in my home community of Peguis First Nation Manitoba, I got up to speak at a public meeting that was attended by Premier Gary Doer and the Minister of Northern Affairs. There were about 250 band members present. Concerned citizens of Peguis had met the previous day and it was decided I would present their concerns to the Premier.

I had planned to make my intervention after the opening speech by the chief. The chief could have not laid a better foundation for my intervention as he remonstrated the provincial delegation for the treatment of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

I was denied permission to use the microphone. I turned and faced the audience and stated "I, too, have a message for the premier."

As I went to hand the premier the letter, a security guard took hold of my shoulder and told me to sit down. I continued and four security guards grabbed me, wrestled me to the floor and tossed me out of the hall.

I am told the spectacle clearly shook the premier and his entourage. These provincial officials later disavowed my identity and replied to media inquiries that "a man" was removed from the room.

The incident shocked many of the Peguis residents present. Clearly what they saw was a new level of violence perpetrated on individuals who desire to voice their concerns in public meetings in our community. Previously such persons could expect to be shouted at and jeered by the chief's supporters - with the tacit if not express approval and encouragement of whoever was chairing the meeting, usually the chief himself. A favourite tactic was public denunciation by the chief in a packed hall. Singling out an individual in the audience the chief would shout, "And you, why are you opposing me when I gave you a house?"

Or, "Why the hell doesn't he move somewhere else if he doesn't like it here?"

This was not physical violence. But it was violence nonetheless. But now the incident last week has signaled to the people of Peguis that if you persist in questioning the Chief Louis Stevenson and his council, the violence could get physical. The message is "You just better think twice before you start asking prying questions about band affairs."

Is this what's in store for First Nation citizens in other communities in Canada? And what is it that the Concerned Citizens of Peguis are asking that so riles our chief? Are we making unreasonable demands of our council which, if acceded to, will harm our community in some way?

Allow me to summarize the key issues which the Concerned Citizens of Peguis have identified:

a. The practice of intimidating citizens through public denunciations or verbal assaults in our meeting halls when they try to voice their concerns must stop.

b. Our council refuses to disclose information to citizens about community funding agreements, audits and public resources. This is in contravention of its funding agreement with the Department of Indian Affairs to disclose information to citizens and to develop an accountability system with their approval, not to mention a breach of their duty to keep our community informed about the status of its programs and finances. The latter duty, we believe, is a traditional right First Nations citizens should expect of their governments.

c. The council misrepresents the will of the community to external authorities. For example an Band Council Resolution was –sent to the Interlake Tribal Council purporting to evince a community decision to withdraw from that organization without a community meeting ever being held to ratify such a decision, such ratification being required by the Tribal Council constitution. That the council later withdrew this BCR does not undo the subversion of the will of Peguis citizens.

d. Unilateral spending decisions are made which are of questionable merit such as giving school children extravagant gifts at a time of high unemployment and shortages.

e. Nepotism and favouritism in the allocation of services and opportunities.

What we are asking for in essence is a more accountable and responsible government. We believe the following statement of principles provides a reasonable starting point for the kinds of changes we are seeking.

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The Concerned Citizens of Peguis

Statement of Principles Respecting the Peoples Rights in Governance

1. The people must be free to participate in assemblies and meetings and to do so without fear of intimidation from other citizens and officials. There is a positive duty on the part of those responsible for the control of meetings and assemblies to ensure the right to speak is safeguarded and respected. No unruly behaviour which threatens an individual's right to speak shall be permitted.

2. The people must be allowed an opportunity to participate in the decision making processes of their community. This means the people will be able to attend council meetings to observe, speak or otherwise participate.

3. The people must be allowed reasonable access to information. This means the right to examine key public documents such as funding agreements, audits, policies, guidelines, laws and constitutions. There will be a public place in our government office where this information will be stored and where people may go to examine them during regular business hours.

4. The people will have a right to fair and reasonable access to community resources including services, programs and opportunities pursuant to appropriate policies and guidelines.

5. The people have a right to a periodic accounting of their community resources by their leaders. This must include as a minimum an accounting of financial, human and other resources at least once a year. In addition Council will provide a public accounting of major land and financial issues as they occur.

We are all too aware the problems we've described are occurring in many other communities across Canada and that perhaps our principles may be appropriate for consideration by those communities. Perhaps the statement should be considered and adopted by all First Nations communities as a minimum guarantee of citizens freedoms and rights.

The responsibilities and powers of First Nations governments are increasing in scope and complexity each year. First Nation citizens, senior governments, and the Canadian public expect our governments to live up to and enforce standards of conduct and behaviour that are consistent with those enjoyed by open and free societies.

Many First Nations are involved in self-government negotiations premised on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and accountable and responsible government. It would surely aid our cause and those negotiations to adopt basic principles to which our governments would adhere and respect.

The proposal to set up an ombudsman's office to investigate allegations of abuse in our communities is helpful but inadequate. We believe the fundamental problem of governance is the reliance on colonial models and authorities as a foundation of governance in our communities. An ombudsman is merely a variant of this and, although it has merits, it is not the whole solution. We believe rather than searching for answers from external authorities and agencies, the answers lie inside us, the people and the responsible leaders in our community.

We believe, by far, the majority of our leaders are caring and honest individuals whose good works and conduct is besmirched by the few who are irresponsible. Are those leaders going to remain silent and allow a few to compromise their work?

The time has come for us to take this problem and deal with it, in our way and with our own hands. We can do this without bothering our white brothers and sisters with constitutional amendments or legislative change. A good way to start this is for our leaders to call a meeting of their community and pass a resolution to adopt this statement of principles or a version of it. Let us respect our traditions. Let us ensure that the control of our governments remains where it belongs, in the hands of our people.

James Wastasecoot is a member of the Peguis First Nation in Manitoba. He is a Cree who publishes The Fisher Post, The First Perspective and the Drum (Manitoba) newspapers.

The Nation is published every two weeks
by Beesum Communications.

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thanks to:
Air Creebec

Printedby Quebecor.
©All Rights Reserved
Publication Mail #0584584
ISSN #1206-2642

***THE NATION* IS A MEMBER OF:**
The James Bay Cree Communications Society
Circle of Aboriginal Controlled Publishers
Canadian Magazine Publishers Association
Quebec Community Newspaper Association
Canadian Community Newspaper Association
Les Hebdos Sélect du Québec

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GAY MARRIAGE: COMING TO A HOME NEAR U?

The day may not be far off when a Cree man can live with a non-Cree man in a common-law marriage in Iyiyuuschii without the band council's consent.

That would be the impact of Bill C-23, Ottawa's legislation on same-sex benefits. The bill has been adopted by Parliament and is awaiting Senate approval.

Bill C-23 was introduced because of a Supreme Court ruling last year that said gay people have the same rights as heterosexuals.

First Nations aren't exempt from the law. Ottawa has promised to amend the Cree-Naskapi Act to force bands to comply with the changes. Mixed-race couples now have the right to live together in the communities only if they are heterosexual.

That has Naskapi officials upset. The Naskapi have opposed the law in a brief to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights and also plan to take their concerns to the Senate.

It's not that the Naskapi are against gay rights, said Johnny Mameamskum, director-general of the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach. The problem is that Ottawa is amending the act without Naskapi or Cree consent. He noted that the Naskapi have been trying to amend the act themselves for 14 years for other reasons without any progress.

"I am not anti-homosexual," said Mameamskum. "What we are against is the amendment to the Cree-Naskapi Act. Under the law, any amendments need the consent of all parties."

He said a unilateral change to the act would "set a precedent for other First Nations across Canada" allowing their treaties to be unilaterally changed, too.

Mameamskum acknowledged, however, that some Naskapi are simply against gay marriages. "There would be concern from Elders because for biblical reasons this is a taboo," he said.

The Grand Council of the Crees has decided not to get involved in the issue because it wants to concentrate on the Cree forestry campaign. But a Grand Council official praised the Naskapi protests: "The Naskapi are fighting the fight that needs to be fought."

The official said Indian Affairs and Justice officials are now privately promising that the bill will not be applied to the Crees and Naskapi without discussions.

"We're afraid that in the future they would make other changes to the treaty without seeking our consent," he said. "There is a small number of people affected. There is no real crisis here. There isn't any clamour from the communities or even a letter raising this as an issue."

The official said Crees have to discuss the question first before any changes are made. "There are certainly Crees who would have trouble with same-sex marriages. The Pentecostals would certainly never go for that," he said.

Others think gay marriages are simply inevitable. "We knew inevitably this was going to come," said Nemaska Chief George Wapachee, who believes Crees would be tolerant of any changes. "Some Elders might have concerns. But on the whole, it's part of the whole changing times. We have to keep up with it."

by Alex Roslin

Gun accident claims toddler's life

A five-year-old Cree girl shot and killed a two-year-old Cree boy with a gun in a terrible accident north of the LG-3 reservoir.

The incident occurred on April 27, around 7:30 p.m. Two adult Crees had just returned from goose hunting and went into a cabin to get some supplies, leaving a gun outside. The girl took the gun and it went off, hitting the boy in the head. He was killed immediately.

Chisasibi police wouldn't give any information, saying the Sûreté du Québec is handling the investigation. "No one is being charged, that much I can say. It was an accident," said one Chisasibi police officer.

But SQ Agent Ronald McInnis, of the Rouyn detachment, said the investigation is still ongoing, and that charges may still be laid for improper storage of a firearm.

Calling all Crees

The Cree Diabetes Network is asking all Crees to take part in the annual Sadie's Walk this June 19 to promote solidarity with people who have diabetes.

This year, the walk will also honour the memory of Mavis Verronneau, a health worker who did much to educate Crees about the illness.

Community members will be asked to walk seven kilometres. Sadie's Walk is named after Sadie Muik, a British Columbia health worker who dedicated her life to diabetes. She died on Good Friday, in 1996.

The walk's goal is to show people with diabetes that the community is standing with them, and that by working together and walking together Crees can prevent diabetes in future generations.

School board holds first general election

The Cree School Board is holding its first ever nation-wide election for the job of chairperson on June 1.

Nominations opened on April 19 and closed May 16. Advance polls will be held May 25. The winning candidate must get over 50 percent of the votes cast. If no one gets over 50 percent, a run-off election will be held. All Crees 18 and up can vote.

YOUR LETTERS...

Tragedy struck two of our Awasis Centre families on the weekend. A fire swept through the homes of two families of Awasis on Saturday night in the St-Henri neighborhood. Luckily, both families were able to escape without any injuries. The fire claimed all their possessions and they are left without homes, clothing and food.

The families, which include 6 children and two mothers, and the Awasis Centre are asking for your help with this emergency. We would request cash donations preferably and food and clothing donations (Awasis Centre can pick-up any donations with our Van).

Please contact Laura Stacey at (514) 398-9528 for further information.

We are asking for a Community effort to assist our Sisters and the little ones!

The Awasis Centre

Wachiya. I would like to comment on the Domestic Violence article by Alex Roslin (Volume 7, No. 11, April 21, 2000). I could not help but feel a bit discouraged to read Alex's article. I must comment!

First of all I would like to say that this article was somewhat disturbing to say the least. Speaking from the grassroots level, my understanding of this article is that even our resource people don't quite know how to deal with this issue. I feel discouraged knowing that people who are in a position to make a difference, people with the know-how and having a seat as a resource person had nothing positive to say in this article. Designating who should be responsible for Domestic Violence is a contradiction of what a true helper is. Remember a native caregiver has no barriers when it comes to helping their people. My heart felt condolences to men and women who live with Domestic Violence every single day must be added. There's hope for us yet.

It's ridiculous to hear our resource people say that there is a lack of resources, I have to add that simply is not true, the problem is the lack of communication between resources. The resources are there. We just don't know how to use them.

I also must note that I don't believe more research needs to be done. Why does this first have to be a statistical issue, before we start taking action. "DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN OUR COMMUNITIES IS EVIDENT." "It's happening," what more do we need? For me personally I wouldn't want to be labeled as just another statistic and neither does any other man or woman.

If the resource people don't have this issue covered then what happens to the people? We just keep waiting until something drastic happens? We cannot say that people feel embarrassed and that it is them that are keeping silent because of shame or beliefs. If we can say that, then what are we going to do about it. We as resource people have to play a major role in educating our people that Domestic Violence should not be a part of our everyday lives. Shame and silence is not the issue here but rather a lack of guidance. Domestic Violence is a silent killer, it wounds the spirit of a person, without our spirit we are nothing. What do people need to do before their cries can be heard?

People want to hear that there is hope, hearing that the Cree Health Board's caseloads are overwhelming is very,very discouraging. If I wasn't on my healing and didn't understand what healing was, those words of overwhelming caseloads would make me think twice about burdening the Health Board with my problems. There's heavy caseloads because we lack communication skills. We need to work together, if we don't we'll never be able to deal with the social issues that surround us. One person alone cannot make change, one organization alone cannot make change, it will not be as overwhelming if we work together. Every corner of our communities there is a resource there. Let's use that resource, what are we afraid of.

I apologize for such an incriminating letter, but as resource people, let's talk positively and try not to discourage our people. I strongly believe that if we start building that gap between organizations we will be a people with a "VISION TO HEAL TOGETHER."

Marilyn Bearskin

I have read "The Nation" only on two occasions so far. I agree your magazine is excellent. I find that it is an excellent vehicle for sharing our thoughts with our Cree brothers and sisters and others across our land. I am a Cree from the southern shores of Hudson Bay in Ontario. I live in Peawanuck on the Weenusk (Winisk) River. It is the home of about 4 to 5 million geese of which I feel very privileged to have access to each spring. On April 23, 2000, I managed to bag 101 geese in one day's shooting. My thanks go to the Creator for the abundance of natural food which she provides for my family. Kichi meegwitch.

The articles I like especially in your magazine is under Healing. I am extending my sincerest gratitude to those people who have shared their stories about their lives and the struggles they have been walking in life and the recovery they are making TODAY. I LOVE YOU. It is a very difficult road to take but it is the only one available to us if we are going to make ourselves, our families, our communities and our Nations healthy.

They are truly "Gifted and are living Survivors" in our communities. I wish to acknowledge in one form or another, we all have been walking this kind of life in the past centuries.(See Story on page ???)

George Hunter,
Peawanuck, Ont.

I am hoping that you will help encourage sustainable forestry practice in Canada by exploring the feasibility of FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) paper for your bind in cards, or other miscellaneous printing purposes.

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Please join our international crusade and encourage responsible forestry practice in Canada.

Sincerely,

Michael de Pencier
Chairman, Key Publishers Company Ltd.
Director, World Wildlife Fund

A suicide in Kuujjuak

In some ways Jackie was a typical teenager in Kuujjuak. She was smart and a natural leader. Younger kids saw her as a rolemodel.

But she was also very withdrawn and her head swam with troubled thoughts. In 1998, Jackie (not her real name) was admitted to the group home for distressed youths in Kuujjuak. The staff there knew the Inuit 15-year-old was suicidal and kept her under close supervision.

After many months, Jackie started opening up about her problems. Then, one day in March 1999, her life was cut tragically short. She committed suicide in the very group home that was supposed to help her and protect her from herself.

It's still not completely clear what happened that day. The coroner and Quebec Human Rights Commission launched separate investigations, which are both still ongoing. The Nunavik Health Board refuses to comment.

But former Nunavik health and social-services workers say the suicide didn't need to happen and that Jackie wasn't given adequate supervision. And they say the suicide is just one sign of the inadequate social services and health care in the Inuit communities.

Twenty-five years after the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement – Canada's first modern treaty – many Inuit say the promises of the agreement haven't been fulfilled. They say the 14 Inuit communities are plagued by substandard, poorly funded health and social services controlled by outsiders who are insensitive to local needs. Few Inuit work in the health network as professionals or managers.

This complaint is shared by some of the health network's most senior officials. "In other organizations, we have trained Inuit people to become teachers, navigators on shrimp boats, airline pilots. We don't seem to have the will to train Inuit people to become nurses and doctors," said Eli Weetaluktuk, executive director of the hospital in Puvirnituq, which serves the western half of Nunavik (see sidebar).

"We as Inuit people are allowing ourselves to be manipulated by non-Inuit who come here and, instead of working for the people, end up working for themselves," he said.

"I decided not to put up with racism any more. No more horsing around."

What is clear to all is that the Inuit people's physical and mental health is not in good shape. An alarming 1995 study showed that Inuit life expectancy has fallen from 65 years in 1975 to 60 years, which made it lower than South Africa's and equal to that of India. The average Canadian life expectancy was 77 years.

A big reason was that the Inuit of Quebec have one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Inuit in their late teens are 25 times more likely to take their lives than the Quebec average.

The complaints about inad-

by Alex Roslin

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Hospital director blasts system

Every time another Inuk commits suicide in Nunavik, Eli Weetaluktuk feels guilty.

As executive director of the hospital in Puvirnituq, Weetaluktuk believes the health care system that he helps run is failing his people. The Inuit of Quebec have one of the highest suicide rates in the world, and the health system isn't doing enough to help, Weetaluktuk said.

He said the health system doesn't take into account traditional Inuit healing methods, traditions or culture. Most of his professional staff aren't Inuit either, he said.

"As an executive-director, I have to feel guilty when we lose a client by suicide. Under the regime, I cannot consult with our elderly on issues like suicide. We are made to feel ashamed of our culture and traditions while our young people are killing themselves because they are confused," said Weetaluktuk.

"I should be the last one to say these things, but as long as we keep denying our traditions and culture, we will see people passing away before they should," he said.

"Unless we are allowed to pursue our traditional methods of intervention, we will continue to see suicide. We need to regroup as Native people. We've existed for 10,000 years before the (Nunavik Health) Board came here from Europe."

He said some of the health board's problems stem from lack of funding. "If the province is telling us to live like francophones and act like francophones, then they should fund us like francophones," he said.

But money is only part of the problem. Weetaluktuk said many non-Inuit staff are resistant to change. Also, the health board seems to have a "lack of commitment" to train Inuit people to take over professional and managerial positions from non-Inuit.

Nunavik Health Board executive director Minnie Grey was dismissive about Weetaluktuk's concerns, saying he should act, not complain: "It's very easy for people to go out and make a complaint." **-A.R.**

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DIRECTED BY NEIL DIAMOND AND ERNEST WEBB.

continued from page 7

equate health and social services are familiar to many Crees. Last year, Crees held a special assembly on health and looked at reforms. Out of that assembly emerged a campaign to wrench more health funding out of the Quebec government.

The Inuit have yet to hold such an assembly or implement major changes. Some Inuit say that's because their people are simply grateful for all the southerners who've come north to work in their health system.

"They have all these people coming from the south. They didn't have that before, and so, in appreciation, they don't say anything," said Lizzie York, an Inuk who was executive director of the Nunavik Health Board for 15 years.

"There is a lot of insecurity among our people. They're afraid to speak," she said.

"It was handled badly"

But people are started speaking out. A petition has circulated in the Inuit communities calling for changes to the health network. Eighty-five people have signed so far. At a health board assembly last summer, Weetaluktuk, one of the top three officials in the Nunavik health network, criticized the health system's insensitivity to Inuit culture and the lack of Inuit staff.

Lizzie York went through her own awakening in 1997. She came back to her job as executive director rejuvenated after three months' leave and full of ideas for changing the system. She wanted to take back control of the health board and make it more accountable to the people. She started with little changes.

"There is always a gap between the community and the regional board."

For example, she said, "I decided not to put up with racism any more. If I saw someone being put down, I started standing up for them if they didn't stand up for themselves. I really started putting my foot down. No more horsing around.

"For all those years, I was just doing what I had to do. I had seen people forced out because they were becoming too close to the Inuit people. The best people were forced out or were so disgusted they left."

York said the racism included jokes and put-downs directed at both Inuit staff and clients – "that our people don't know how to bring up children, that they are drunks."

Inuit health at a glance

Suicide rate in Nunavik: 101.8 per 100,000 inhabitants
Suicide rate in Quebec: 18.1 per 100,000 inhabitants
Suicide rate in Nunavik for 15 to 19-year-olds: 480 per 100,000 inhabitants
Nunavik infant mortality rate: four times Canadian average
Rate of trauma death in Nunavik: seven times Quebec average

SOURCE: NUNAVIK REGIONAL BOARD OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, 1995 STUDY

York said she quickly met with resistance to her changes. Key managerial positions in the health board were controlled by non-Inuit, who felt threatened by her newfound assertiveness, she said.

Then, on March 13, 1999, Jackie committed suicide. The girl had been a good friend of York's daughter. The day before the suicide, Jackie and York's daughter had both stopped a boy from the community who had tried to commit suicide. After this, Jackie herself started talking again about suicide. York's daughter warned the staff at the group home about Jackie's precarious state of mind – "so they were quite aware of (Jackie's) intent," said York.

The next day, around dinner-time, Jackie was left alone in her room, according to former health staff. She went to another room where she barricaded herself in and then hung herself with a pair of pants, said the former staff.

"If she was that suicidal, she should not have been by herself. She should have had someone with her all the time until she had calmed down," said York. "I thought it was handled badly."

Another former Inuit health worker who is familiar with the incident agreed: "They left a child unattended. That's why she was brought to the group home – because she was suicidal."

The group home's coordinator didn't return our phone call.

After the suicide, York called in the Quebec Human Rights Commission to investigate. A month later, her contract wasn't renewed. She was told she wasn't a team player, had worked there too long and was absent a lot from work – allegations she denies.

Minnie Grey, the Nunavik Health Board's new executive director, refused to comment on the suicide because the human-rights commission's investigation is still not finished. She did say, however, that the high Inuit suicide rate "is not something to be proud of."

As for York, Grey would not comment directly on her complaints or employment situation.

Grey acknowledged, however, that the Nunavik health network lacks trained Inuit staff and that this affects services to the communities. Out of 50 or 60 nurses in Nunavik, only three are Inuit, she said.

"That's not to say that people aren't doing a good job. (But) there is always a gap between the community and the regional (health) board. Most of the professionals are not Inuit," said Grey.

One big problem is non-Inuit staff often don't stay in their jobs very long. "The turn-over in (non-Inuit) professionals who come here to work is a problem, and we do have problems replacing people. That directly affects ongoing files," she said.

"If we had trained Inuit, we wouldn't have that problem."

Grey is, however, positive about the future. Earlier this month, the provincial Minister Delegated for Health, Social Services and Youth, Gilles Baril, was in Nunavik to announce $1.8 million in new funds this year for youth programs, including job training and suicide prevention. Quebec will give $3.3 million in annual funding for youth projects in subsequent years.

"Never in our history have we seen this amount of money coming in to deal with these issues," said Grey. "We have only been funded on a piecemeal basis."

But others say money isn't enough to solve the problems in the Nunavik health network, and that big changes are needed.

NEXT ISSUE: Why the mayor of Inukjuak resigned from the Nunavik Health Board.

MOTHER'S DAY, THE HISTORY OF...

The earliest Mother's Day celebrations can be traced back to the spring celebrations of ancient Greece in honor of Rhea, the Mother of the Gods. During the1600's, England celebrated a day called "Mothering Sunday." Celebrated on the 4th Sunday of Lent (the 40 day period leading up to Easter), "Mothering Sunday" honored the mothers of England.

During this time many of the England's poor worked as servants for the wealthy. As most jobs were located far from their homes, the servants would live at the houses of their employees. On Mothering Sunday the servants would have the day off and were encouraged to return home and spend the day with their mothers. A special cake, called the mothering cake, was often brought along to provide a festive touch.

As Christianity spread throughout Europe the celebration changed to honor the "Mother Church" - the spiritual power that gave them life and protected them from harm. Over time, the church festival blended with the Mothering Sunday celebration. People began honoring their mothers as well as the church.

In the United States Mother's Day was first suggested in 1872 by Julia Ward Howe (who wrote the words to the Battle hymn of the Republic) as a day dedicated to peace. Ms. Howe would hold organized Mother's Day meetings in Boston, Mass. every year.

In 1907 Ana Jarvis, from Philadelphia, began a campaign to establish a national Mother's Day. Ms. Jarvis persuaded her mother's church in Grafton, West Virginia to celebrate Mother's Day on the second anniversary of her mother's death, the 2nd Sunday in May. By the next year Mother's Day was also celebrated in Philadelphia.

Mother's Day was first suggested in 1872 by Julia Ward Howe (who wrote the words to the Battle hymn of the Republic) as a day dedicated to peace.

Ms. Jarvis and her supporters began to write to ministers, businessmen, and politicians in their quest to establish a national Mother's Day. It was successful as by 1911 Mother's Day was celebrated in almost every state. President Woodrow Wilson, in 1914, made the official announcement proclaiming Mother's Day as a national holiday that was to be held each year on the 2nd Sunday of May.

While many countries of the world celebrate their own Mother's Day at different times throughout the year, Canada and other countries (Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia, and Belgium) also celebrate Mother's Day on the second Sunday of May.

Story of Mama

written by Hannah Louttit

You were the first one who said I love you
when we came into this world
You held us and protected us when
everything was a blur
You sang a lullaby to us
and so beautifully
You'd wait for us to sleep
so peacefully
You've made our childhood a memory
and still today, we can see it clearly
Mama, we are proud of you and
we love you dearly
You told us everything that was true
and we've written this Story of Mama
just for you

We would like to dedicate this poem to our loving, supportive, caring mother, Margaret Linda Spencer Louttit.

Mother, keep doing what you're doing. We are with you all the way. We are so happy to have a mother like you so don't quit, you're almost finished. Our mother is attending Vanier College in Montreal and this is her last year in Special Care Counselling. We are proud of you, Mom.

With luv always your children,

Sherry Ann, Hannah, Charles, April, Nathan and Jonathan Louttit (Chisasibi, QC)

"MOMISMS"

"Momisms" are phrases our mothers have often said to us, out of anger, fear, frustration, encouragement, and love. For those of you who are away from your Mothers this time of year, just read a few of these momisms over, and have a few chuckles remembering what prompted them...

I'm going to give you until the count of three.

I would never have talked to MY mother like that!

Don't you use that tone with me!

What if everyone jumped off a cliff? Would you do it, too?

You're going to poke your eye out with that thing.

Your father is going to hear about this when he gets home.

Were you born in a barn? Close the door - and don't slam it!

Don't put that in your mouth, you don't know where it's been.

Why? Because I SAID do, that's why!

Don't you roll them eyes at me!

Go play outside! It's a beautiful day!

Don't drink out of the milk carton!

I hope someday you have three of your own just like you, then you'll know.

You don't always get what you want. It's a hard lesson, but you might as well learn it now.

Call me when you get there, just so I know you're okay.

Wherever you go and whatever you do, remember I love you!

Bored? How can you be bored! I was never bored at your age.

You won't be happy until you break that, will you?

You're the best kid in the whole world!

I don't care who started it, I said stop!

No.

You can't find it? Where did you leave it last?

Don't go out with a wet head, you'll catch cold.

I worry about you.

You can be anything you want to, if you just set your mind to it.

What would you do if I wasn't here?

You'll miss me when I'm gone!

Do as I say, not as I do.

I don't care what everyone is doing, I care what you are doing!

When I was a little girl...

Act your age.

You have a beautiful complexion!

Don't talk with your mouth full!

Go ask your father.

What I Love About Mom...

We called daycare centres and homes in Creeland to find out what the kids had to say about their mommies. They said it was easy. This is what we learned.

"Everything. She buys me clothes, makes me things, sews my clothes."
Dawn Namagoose, daughter of Bessie Tomatuk

"His heart." (confers with friend.) "His head."
Sigoun Wapachee, 6-years-old

"I don't know. I'm in grade three and I've killed three geese."
Calls back later, "Keeps me well...feeds me...washes my clothes."
Abel Petawabano, 9-years-old, mother Charlotte.

"Bye,"
Andy Wapachee, 4-years-old

"Toys, she gives me things."
Roxanne Neacappo, 5-years-old, mom, Christine Chalifoux

"Three I told you."
Nathan John Fireman, mom Margaret Cox, 3-years-old: annoyed with question.

"I don't know...she gives me things...I don't know..."
Jesse Diamond, 4-years-old, mom Wanda

Happy Mother's Day to a Dear and Wonderful mother, Emily. Thank you for carrying me for nine months without the abuse of anything that would hurt me. Thank you for picking me up when I cried and nurturing me when I needed to be held. You were there for me through my toughest battles in life. You held me still when I came home in a drunken stupor and cared for me as you have always done. Unconditional love is rare but I've always had it with you. God must have known that I would need a mother who loved me like you do. Through you, I am able to nurture friendships with love and honor, for it is what you have always shown me. Thank you for being who you are. Words can never fully express what a difference having you for a mother has made in my life. When God chose mothers for others, I am so blessed that He chose us for each other. I love you dearly.

With love, Lisa (Whap.)

We want to wish a happy mother's day to a special person to us. The person that holds us when we cry, the person that fulfills our needs, the person that laughs with us, the person that plays with us and the person that provides all our needs. Mother, we would like to thank you for keeping us in your womb for nine months, we would like to thank you for the courage you had when you brought us into this wonderful world. Happy Mother's Day Mom, many more to come. This special person is our mother, Margaret Trapper. We love you so much. With lots of love, hugs and kisses. From all your kids and grandchildren. PS We need a baby brother. (joke)

Happy Mother's Day to Harriet Georgekish, Clara Weapinicappo, Beatrice and Leona Cheezo, Lillian and Lisa Stewart, Elizabeth Georgekish, Florence Shecaplo, Karen Visitor and Natalie Mark. Have a wonderful Mother's Day and God Bless You from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren (Wemindji)

Rebecca Bearskin, Happy Mother's Day! Take care of your daughters. Give them lots of hugs and kisses for me and tell them they're from me. Rebecca, even though you're married and you have your own family now, you will always be my baby sister because you're the baby of the family. Enjoy your day! With love always, your sister in Mistissini, Edith. PS: also Happy belated birthday on April 1st.

Happy Mother's Day!

Having you as a mother is a great gift. Knowing there is someone who will share happiness for life. We share a special closeness that is very dear to me, the memories we share with the special trust of love that only we can find. Mom I love you with all my heart and nothing can change the way I feel about you. I carry your love in my heart every day. Happy Mother'sDay to a special Mom, Sheila Mark-Stewart

With love, your daughter Brandy-Lee.

Happy Mother's Day to our mother, Shirley B. Moar. We're thankful to have a mother who loves and care about us as much as you do. All our love, Michelle, Shawn, Ernest, Trevor and your granddaughter Miranda B.

I would like to wish Happy Mother's Day to my wonderful sister Amanda Coon-Come, my best friend Lisa Otter and my friends in Amos Melanie Otter, Angela Diamond, Bianca Fireman, Jenny Ruperthouse, Elisa Kistabish, Rosie McKenzie, Tiffany Trapper and Diana Ruperthouse. I wish you all the best on Mother's Day and many more to come. With lots of love from Priscilla C-C (Waskaganish)

Happy Mother's Day to a very special Mom, Irene Matches (Chisasibi). I love you so much Mom and I respect you. I want to thank you for all the things you have done for me in my life. You stood by me when I needed you and you also taught me how to raise my son. Even though we're miles away apart, I still took your advice because I knew that it was good advice and that's how you raised us. I will never stop taking your advice because you know better than me. I am so thankful to have you. Once again Mom, thanks for all the things you have done for me. I hope this day will be as special as you are. Happy Mother's Day, I love both you and Dad, take a day off, don't baby-sit, enjoy your day - go with my Dad somewhere, have a joy-ride! Please take my advice. Love always, your daughter in Mistissini, Edith Gunner. I miss you and Dad so much and I'll see both of you again soon.

Happy "Grand" Mother's Day to Emily Petagumskum. What can we say? We can start off by saying that you are the BEST. You are always there for us to run to when we do something wrong. You hold us even if we make each other cry. You tell our parents not to say too much because they'll do the same when they have grandchildren too! Anyway, we want to tell you that we love you... Happy Grandmother's Day, From Cora-Lee, Carrie-Ann, Fabain, Felicia, Craig, Robin, Ashley, Gerry, Jonathan and Nicholas

World's Greatest Mother

This is to certify that

_____

is the greatest Mom in the whole wide world!

Signed on this Mother's Day by

_____

XOXOXOXOXOXOXO

READERS SURVEY 2000!

We were goofing off, as usual, one afternoon wondering what you the readers want. What you enjoy. What you listen to. What movies you watch. How old you are. Male or female. If you are still there for us of if you have left us for another.

In truth,we were feeling a bit insecure and wondering if you still love us the way you used to. Tell us you love us, won't you? Tell us you still care for us or not and you could win a big old basket full of mystery goodies.

Fill out this handy questionnaire, sign your name on the dotted line and send it in a.s.a.p. You know where to send it. Everybody who's anybody knows where we are. And don't use any of that chicken scratch writing either. We have enough trouble trying to read faxes.

Without further ado, let the interrogation begin...

Which of the following do you read and why?

- News ☐ _____
- Briefs ☐ _____
- Rez Notes ☐ _____
- Editorial ☐ _____
- Features ☐ _____
- Profiles ☐ _____
- Recipes ☐ _____
- Northern Sky ☐ _____
- Book Reviews ☐ _____
- Classifieds ☐ _____
- Poetry ☐ _____
- Letters ☐ _____
- Legends ☐ _____
- Cree@large ☐ _____

What would you like to see in The Nation?

Humour

- Comic strip ☐
- Word Games ☐
- Jokes ☐
- Funny Photos ☐
- Crazy interviews ☐

Entertainment

- Fashion ☐
- Trivia ☐
- Internet ☐
- Music, Film, Book Reviews ☐
- Travel ☐
- Restaurant Reviews ☐
- Movie Listings ☐

Education

- History ☐
- Culture ☐
- Tradition ☐
- Language ☐
- Kids ☐

Health

- Spirituality ☐
- Healing ☐
- Nutrition ☐
- Exercise ☐

Other

- Inspirational Stories ☐
- Horoscopes ☐
- Quizzes ☐
- Role Model ☐
- Sports ☐
- Parenting ☐
- Contests ☐
- Polls ☐
- Streeters ☐
- Business ☐

Name your favorite:

Movie _____

Magazine _____

Book _____

Song _____

Band _____

Food _____

Celebrity _____

Role Model _____

Nation Issue _____

Nation Cover _____

Rate the Nation

Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Photography	1	2	3	4	5
Design	1	2	3	4	5
Layout	1	2	3	4	5
Type Size	1	2	3	4	5
Interesting	1	2	3	4	5
Educational	1	2	3	4	5
Fun	1	2	3	4	5
Informative	1	2	3	4	5
Negative	1	2	3	4	5
Political	1	2	2	4	5
Mediocre	1	2	3	4	5
Boring	1	2	3	4	5

Other (Godlike, Jack of all trades, Master of none,Reeks)

Who are you, anyway?

Name _____

Age _____

Sex _____

Community _____

Education _____

Marital Staus _____

Occupation _____

Hobbies _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Where Did You Pick Up This Issue? _____

Where Do You Usually Read The Nation? _____

If you could change one thing about The Nation what would it be? (Winner gets surprise gift basket! Make sure you answer all questions and give us your personal info.)

My story is typical. I am a residential school survivor of St. Anne's school of Fort Albany in Ontario. I am what I call myself as the tail-end of the residential school era. I remember leaving Winisk in the fall and going across the river (the airport side) and the snow geese were flying inland from the bay to feed in the muskegs. It was beautiful seeing this wildlife activity. The wind was kind of cold and drizzling. I did not know where I was going except to meeting this big sea-plane (Canso) at the Winisk airport and going to school somewhere far away in the distance.

by George Hunter

I remember being lifted and getting on the plane and flying through fog, It was windy- I remember landing in the rough waters of the Albany river- The waves were rough and splashing on the seaplane. I remember being lifted again from the hole of the passenger section onto the boats, which had met us to take us to an island where the school vehicles were waiting to take us to the residential school. As I was being lifted out of the plane I remember looking into my dad's face and wondering why he was handing me over to strangers. I did not know what was happening. Nobody explained to me this transition I was making at a very young age. I do not remember the Journey from the boat landing to the school, or the registration if there was any when we got there or the introduction of what to expect in the schooi. I believe I was 6 at the time and my brother was 4.

I don' t remember if we had supper that evening, in fact I don' t remember where I slept or where my little brother slept the first night?

I can tell you that the first gift we lost in the residential school is our innocence as children, It did not take us long to become con artists with one another and with our supervisors, The absence of adult family members (parents) to guide and to love us was not there. I can tell you I never received parental type of love and affection from the foreigners who managed the school.

I spent seven (7) years at St. Anne's. In my time there I can share that there was spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, verbal, cultural and sexual abuse there.

All of the type of abuses I am mentioning I was abused in those forms at St. Anne's. The abusers were both the adults managing the school and those of our kind who were older and taking advantage of their own kind in both the boys and girls dormitories.

Yes, some of our kind did abuse their own kind at St. Anne's. This is the untold story, which has remained hidden in the healing conferences which are being held today. Sadly, some of these individuals have either committed suicide or they continue to live in dysfunction or have found jobs counseling in our communities today.

In the residential school year of 1973 and 1974, my little brother drowned at Lake St. Anne's, skating too early during freeze-up. This was a big blow for our family as we were at our trapline that season. I remember my brother Charlie, he never knew what his last name was when we first got there. So the supervisors used to call him Charlie Pogo (In Cree pogo is the same as saying the word only in English) He simply did not know his last name.

I was abused at the tender age of nine at St. Anne's. It took me twenty-four years to disclose my sexual abuse to my family and safe others. I tried sharing this with my parents and friends but they choose to use it against me at first. Today I do not mind sharing this with you now. I have come a long way and although my abusers may not know it, I want to let them know I FORGIVE THEM completely. I choose to forgive the abusers, the school, the church and the past residential school policies of the government.

Today I choose RECOVERY over laying charges and filing lawsuits to anyone. My recovery program guides me to understand the discovery of myself, my flaws and defections and to keep uncovering destructive learned behavior. I continue to have and to change these as I journey to the future so that I may find peace and contentment. I must prepare myself for my journey to the spirit world.

To those whom I may have injured or harmed knowingly and unknowingly, I am deeply sorry for the pain and sorrow I have caused to you. I admit I made these mistakes in my life.

Now in recovery I must say that it is difficult in taking this road. First of all, the majority of our communities live in a state of dysfunction. And the majority of the time our leaders do not offer effective recovery programs. I believe 85 to 98 percent of our communities are dysfunctional today. Because we have been hurt and oppressed for several centuries, we have learned as a defense mechanism to adopt behavior which is quite destructive and abnormal.

In favor of effective recovery programs, we choose to recycle anger, pain, resentment, aggression, toxic oppression, pity, toxic shame and cultural denial. Year in, year out this is the stuff we recycle in our communities. We live in a state of managing crises all the time. We need to get out of this state. I know that as we begin to embrace recovery and as we become more therapy friendly, we will stumble like infants at first. This is what I find in my recovery. A majority of the time I have no one to turn to. There are more unsafe people presently than there are safe people in our communities at the moment.

A good number of our Elders, spouses, children, therapists and friends are not even safe or healthy. But this is the environment where we must begin our recovery. Right at home.

Consider the following visualization I made on my own when I was trying to understand what this environment looked like and what the odds looked like now and what we are up against.

continued on page19

We Signed the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement in Part Because it Promised Community Development and Participation in the Development of the Territory, Eeyou Istchee

The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement is a treaty that guarantees the social and economic development of the Cree People, "the Eeyouch". It was designed to provide the Eeyouch with protections for the environment and their way of life that depends on it. It was also to provide the Crees with priority access to employment and to the means to develop their communities. The programs and policies to accomplish these things were to be developed through policy development committees.

What has happened is that both Canada and Quebec have fought over the years to kill these promised special programs and the committees responsible for the development of policies and programs. As a result, today about 40% of the Eeyouch are unemployed. Moreover, affordable housing has not been available in numbers sufficient to meet the growing needs of the Eeyouch.

This year, the number of social housing units to be made available to the Eeyouch will likely be about 58. This is the number of units that will likely be eligible for subsidized financing through the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. At their last meeting the Board/ Council decided to divide these units according to the level of comparative need for housing in each of the nine communities.

The result is as follows:

Community	Backlog Housing Need (Year: 2000 only)	Number of Social Housing Units Allocated
Whapmagoostui	48	2
Chisasibi	386	11
Wemindji	109	7
Eastmain	37	2
Waskaganish	163	9
Nemaska	56	2
Ouje Bougoumou	11	0
Waswanipi	123	6
Mistissini	470	19

At the present rate of social housing construction the need will never be met. The 58 houses to be built this year represent 4% of the year 2000 need. Over next 5 years the need will grow by 597 units or 8% per year.

We must force the governments to respect their 1975 obligations to the Eeyouch so that we can realize the promise of community and economic development!

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Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Astchee)
Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Astchee)

ᓀᐦᐃᐤ ᑕᕽᑭᒪᔭ
Cree Regional Authority
Administration Régionale Crie

The former St. Anne's Residenial School in Fory Albany

PAUL RICKARD

Visualize a beautiful river, which runs alongside your community or territory. Visualize that it is deep...that it is wide...it has rocks and aquatic plants and the fish are swimming by in all directions following the currents.

Visualize that the riverbank is high, low, rocky and muddy in different spots along its banks. Create different scenes of the river by yourself.

Now visualize you are going under water and you can breath and you are looking around and walking upstream against the current. You are walking at the bottom and it feels good. You can't see the other side of the river. It is too dark to see the other side because the river is wide. But you see one side to the right. The riverbank is beautiful. Now walk upstream. The rocks, plants and fish are beautiful as you walk up the river. It is strong but you can move forward. You pass several bends as you make this journey. Soon you find a fish net up ahead. You keep walking to it. There are fish and other things caught and tangled there, you walked into it and you get tangled yourself. You can't get out.

Your arms, legs and body gets tangled. You struggle to get out. But you can't. In your entanglement you get a chance to see who is stuck there. It is all of our governments, the Indian Act, the issues and grief of the residential school, the churches, our elders, our spouses, our children, our friends, family violence, alcoholism, drug and all kinds of addictions, social problems, infidelity issues, marriage and family breakdowns, brainwashing, suicides, cultural denial, Post traumatic stress disorders, elder and child abuse, incest, economic manipulation, failures of all sorts, toxic divisions, toxic shame, toxic anger, non-forgiveness, codependency, loss of self power, gambling and Internet addiction, people sharing with unsafe people, false prophets, wounded healers, sleeping leaders, community deficits, people dumping their garbage and anger with unsafe people and getting hurt all the more, staying and living in the pain, over utilized and stressed leaders, fear of self-discovery and recovery...and all of those things that make up of our communities and those that you may want to add.

Stay with that for a while and observe all of that. Get acquainted with all of that.

Now visualize you struggle and quite easily you get out of the entanglement and you back off downstream a bit and you are free. Now begin to travel again by avoiding and going around the net and continue upstream. Along the journey you encounter a lot of other nets along the river. This time you are more wise. You avoid by going around them.

You now make the choice to never again to get caught in that entanglement where you were before. Such are the obstacles of healing and recovery.

Knowing the environment where we must recover from is essential to successful recovery.

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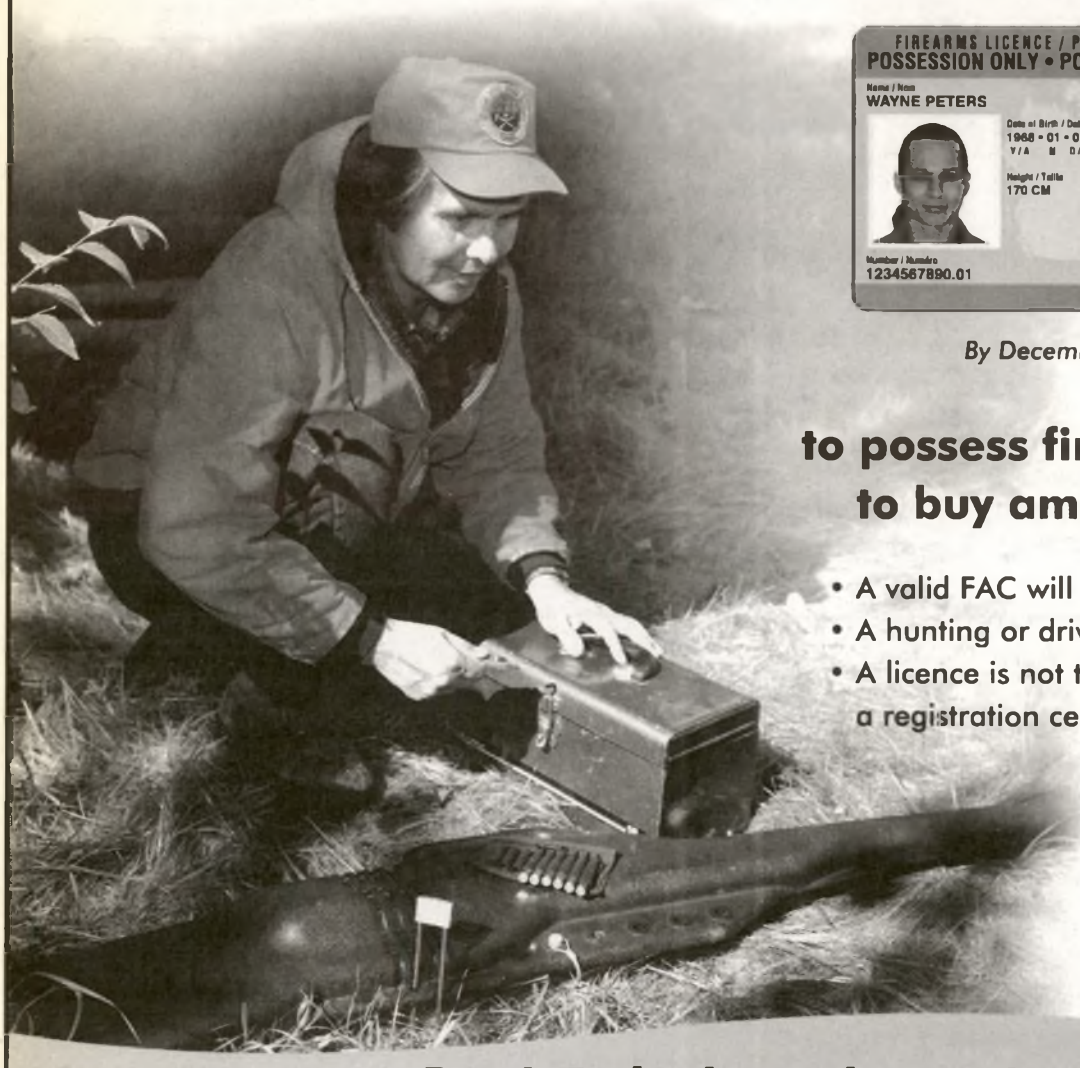
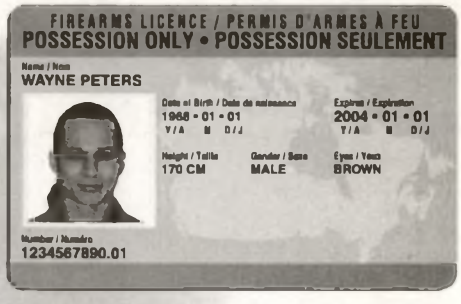
Important Message to all Firearm Owners

By the end of this year...

You must have a licence





By December 2000

to possess firearms and to buy ammunition.

- A valid FAC will do.
- A hunting or driver's licence won't.
- A licence is not the same as a registration certificate.

Don't Delay! Apply Now!

For more information, application forms and help filling them out:

1 800 731-4000

www.cfc.gc.ca

Firearms Safety is Everyone's Concern!

Canada

Public Notice

Election for the Office of Chairperson

Take notice that the Council for Commissioners of the Cree School Board has set the date for the elections to the office of Chairperson of the Cree School Board as follows:

Thursday, June 1st, 2000

The polls shall be open from 9:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. *An advance poll will be held on May 25th, 2000 for the electors unable to vote on June 1st, 2000.*

The term of office shall be for three (3) years. The functions of the office are to be carried out on a full time basis.

All information and inquiries can be obtained from the Chief Returning Officer at the following address and telephone number:

John Henry Wapachee
Chief Returning Officer
2 Lakeshore Road
Nemaska (Québec) J0Y 3B0
Tel.: (819) 673-2512
Fax: (819) 673-2542
e-mail: jhwapachee@hotmail.com

*** Note: Polling Stations will be set up in all nine (9) Cree Communities, including southern stations of:**
- **Ottawa**
- **Montreal**
- **Val d'Or**

Avis Public

Des Élections pour le poste de Président

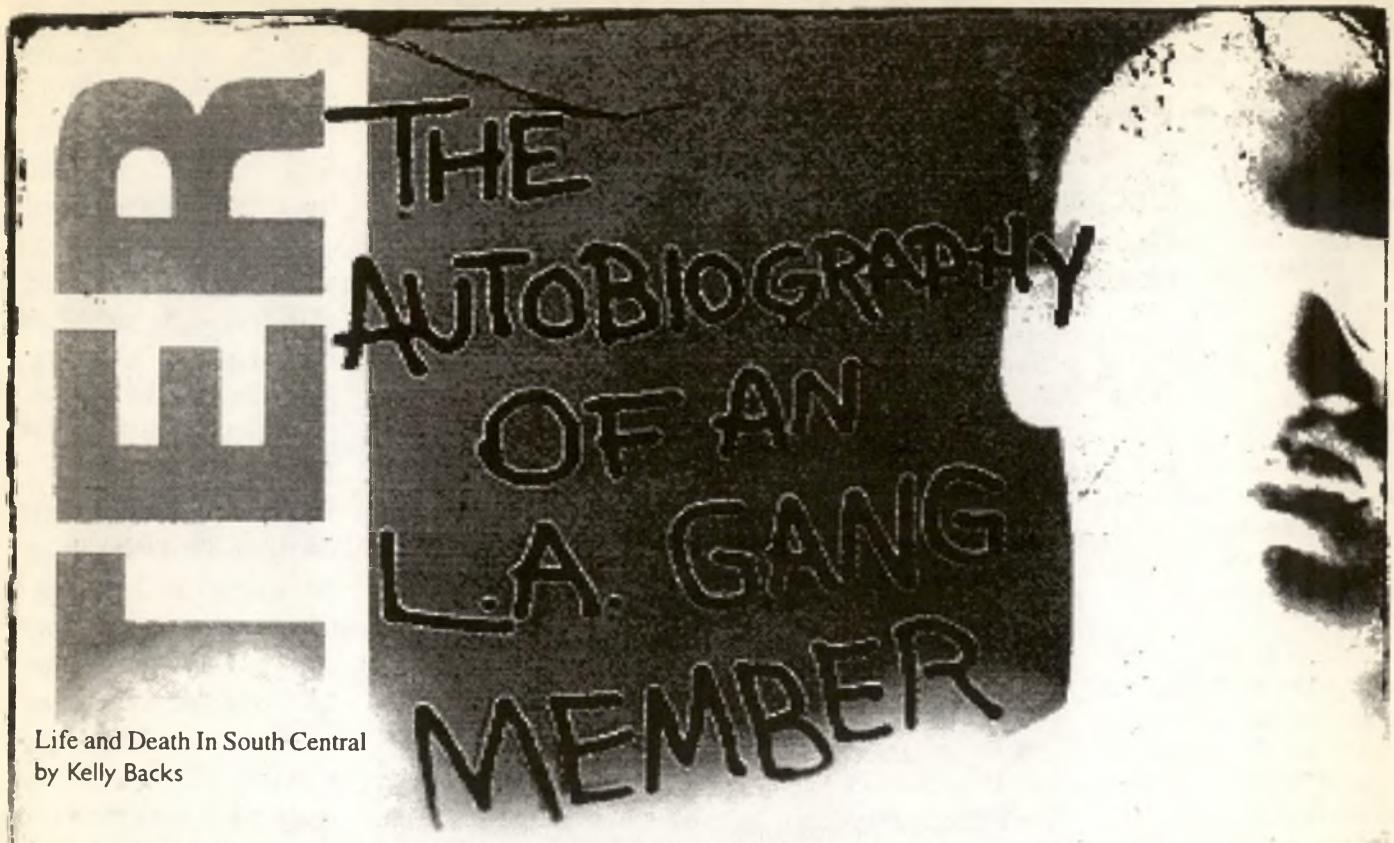
Prenez avis que le Conseil des commissaires de la Commission scolaire crie a établi la date qui suit pour rélection au poste de Président de la Commission scolaire crie.

Jeudi, 1er juin 2000

Toute informations peut être obtenu du Directeur de scrutin à l ' addresse et au numéro de telephone suivants.

John Henry Wapachee
Directeur du scrutin
2, Lakeshore Road
Nemaska (Québec) J0Y 3B0
Téléphone: (819) 673-2512
Télécopieur: (819) 673-2542
Courriel: jhwapachee@hotmail.com

*** Note: Les bureaux de scrutins seront etablis dans les neufs (9) communauté cris. Incluant celles du sud, donc:**
- **Ottawa**
- **Montreal**
- **Val d'Or**



Life and Death In South Central
by Kelly Backs

It is said that we all have at least one good book in us. "Monster" shows us that Kody Scott, Eight Tray Crip banger from South Central Los Angeles has all that. From his initiation at 11 years of age to his conversion to the Nation of Islam, Kody, a.k.a. "Monster", a.k.a. Sanyika Shakur shows a life that no one in their right mind would want to live, but shows himself a sane man in an insane time.

The war in the streets that he and his "home boys" and "home girls" have been waging for 22 years is the thing of nightmares. Life in the 'hood is straight forward. You're a "gangbanger"', a gun-toting gang member with the protection of your "homies" and a full time job cutting short the life of any opposing gang member. Or you're a"soldier-cop", turning the gangs against each other in a sick attempt to clean the streets. Or everyone else, the "civilians", praying not to become a "vic"—the victim. Each group lives by their own code, with the rising "getto stars" trying to survive under the most lethal.

Shakur shares his bloodlust with the pride of a righteous warrior. From missions to enemy turf in the search of status and body count, into the various levels of the penal system, "Monster" shows the stages of gang life. The pursuit of O.G. rank, "Original Gangster", is all consuming, nothing else matters in the 'hood. Death lies in wait for the slightest "diss" or disrespect. Stepping on someone's shoes could push you into an early grave.

South Central is in a state of civil war, brought on by the marginalization of a people. The need to escape from it brings drug use and abuse. The frustration caused by it brings brother to kill brother. It's a neighborhood where the average lifespan of a black male is less than 30 years and first cause of death is murder. Drugs and violence exists in every community, but we hope it will never get like this. The level of communication that Sanyika Shakur exhibits is part of the cure to end this cycle.

"Monster" is a lesson in the language of South Central, the sense of community of the small gangs that have held it in a grip of terror, and the downward spiral of the life expectancy of a young Black man in the most matter of fact styles. Details of Kody Scott's life have an unreal quality to them, but you can't help but know that he is telling the truth.

"Monster" is a story of redemption, but without apology. There are no regrets in his tale and the rage is still there. The change in Sanyika Shakur is the focus of his rage, from crashing down on fellow "gangstas" to looking at the bigger picture, the injustices and racism that exists when one part of society oppresses another.

Monster: the Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member
Penguin $12.99

CLASSIFIEDS

101-BIRTHDAYS

I would like to say happy 19TH Birthday to a vary special person in my life Jeremy James diamond On april,19. I hope you have a great time on your birthday P.S take-care of your self ILYOU!!! from: me you know WHO?

Hey Valerie, your birthday's coming up eh? excited? I bet you are! Well Happy 5th Birthday to you on the 27th of May! I love you very much, especially that cute little dance you danced during Goose Break! Hugs & kisses going out to you on your special day. Luv Celina...

I would like to wish my "not so little anymore BRO" Nigel Orr a happy belated 14th birthday on may 1.HAPPY BIRTHDAY NIGEL!!!! So how's life now with you're shiny new computer? (nah just kidding!)This note is mainly to tell you that I know you're slowly getting older like I'm, you'll probably run into some problems and changes that every teen goes through but I'll always be there for you!, to give advice or just to listen. I love you alot and hopefully you'll come to me when you're down or if you have questions about girl's or should I be saying CHICKS! You're probably blushing right now eh? well sorry but if I'm embarrassing you but I just had to do this. Good luck in school and don't let anyone push you into something you don't wanna do. Luv ya! from you're big sis Katrina p.s I'm gonna miss fighting over the remote! kidding.

I would like to send a Happy Belated Birthday to my brother Patrick Mamianskum, Happy Birthday to you, Happy 19th Birthday to you. Hey Patrick don't drink and party to much... Love Andrea xox

I would like to send Happy Birthday wishes to Amy Dick on May 2nd,Barbara Dawling on May 10th, Tanya Dawn House on May 14th, Joisanne House on May 22nd, Johanne Cheezo on May 24th, Jessica Dawling on May 25th, and at last but not least Rachelle Lafond on May 27. Happy Birthday to you all!! Love Andrea xox

200-ANNOUNCEMENT

Take notice that, Mary Ann Polson, Address, 34 Poplar Street, waswanipi, Quebec, JOY 3CO will present to the director of Civil Status, demand change of name to Caroline Mary Ann Polson, April 17, 2000.

300-MOTHER'S DAY

Happy Mother's Day Mom! Louise: I just realized that I haven't been with you on Mother's Day for a long time now. But that doesn't mean I don't think of you on that special day. It is just hard for me to reach you at this time of the year. During this special occasion, you're always somewhere out there... getting a tan. Anyway, when you return to society, send me my flamingo. All my love LSB. Happy Mother's Day Sisters and In-Laws. Flamingos wanted (with no pink feathers, be nice now).

Happy Mother's Day to our special Mom from the Esau girls: Alicia, Clarissa, Diana and Alexia. We love you so so much, hugs and kisses.

Happy Mother's Day to Yvonne. Love you, from the Esau girls' Dad (Peter). Also Happy Mother's Day to all my sisters and especially to my Mom (Alice). Love you Mom!

This message goes out to my Grandma Kathleen. I hope that this message will show in a warm little heart to heart way you're thought of, remembered, and happily wished... and especially nice Mother's Day. Happiness always, love your Granddaugter, Serenitee (Posh) XOXO

I would like to wish happy Mother's Day to my mother Kathleen on May 14, 2000. Having you for a mother was the best beginning life could have given me. I love you... your daughter Lee Ann

Happy Mother's Day to my mother Rosie Wapachee from Nemaska. Mom, I want to thank you for standing with me in my difficult times. You were always there for me when I felt so alone. You always convinced me that there was a brighter future ahead of me. Thank you for all your support and never ending love. Enjoy your day. Your daughter, Charlotte

To My Sister, My Friend Daisy, Sophie, Charlotte, Flora, Lily1 Through the years, we've grown into a very special kind of relationship. And although I feel lucky to have you for a sister, I feel even more fortunateto have you for a friend a friend I can count on anytime and anywhere...It's great to be able to all you on the phone whenever I need to talk -knowing that you'll listen and understand, and that I can trust you with my thoughts and feelings...We seem to be able to tell each other almost anything,and I just want you to know how much I appreciate the closeness between us - how much it meansto be able to share so much with you - my sister, my friend.Have a Happy Mother's Day to you all. Love and Prayers: Anna H. Trapper

To my friend, cousin Desiree Blacksmith in Waswanipi. So Dez...how's life treating ya? I heard you're man just turned 18.Well I just wanted you to know that I miss you alot and I'll hopefully be seeing you sometime this summer?...so we can catch up on things, you know?... girl talk and Gulp!Gulp!Gulp!...Burrrrp! nah just kidding!. But seriously if you need someone to talk to about all the s*** that comes with life...I'm there. You can call me anytime. Well anyway gotta go! friend always, Katrina, Nem.

400-WANTED

Need extra cash? Staying in Montreal? If you are: computer literate (Word, Excel, etc.), organized, a good, fast typist. Contact The Nation. We are looking for someone for part time work at our office. Phone: 514-272-3077 Fax: 514-278-9914

Looking for a roommate to share a large 5 1/2. Must be a student or professional and a non-smoker. Good location near downtown and all

CLASSIFIEDS

amenities. Call 849-2553.

Anyone that has pieces of hide. Tanned or not tanned. Can they send it to me in Montreal. I use it to wrap my dreamcatchers. Thank you. My adress is, Robie Nichols, 1923 St. Germain, Montreal Est Quebec, H1W 2T5

700-PENPALS

SCF seeking Email pen pals between the ages of 17-22 of any community. I'm 18, 5'7 and I love to make new friends. Looking forward to hearing from you! Dreamwhisper_@excite.com (I'll be waiting!)

Hey Cree Nation! Seeking E-mail pen pals. I am SCM 19 yrs of age. I am from ah! can't tell ya! So if you wish to make a new friend, E-mail me at avs_102@hotmail.com. I will respond your E-mail.

hello to eeyou istchee SCM looking for pen pals throughout the James bay area I'm from ahhh I will respond to anybody who will write ehhgoo deh wachiya e-mail me at roaddog74@hotmail.com

I would like to say to a girl named Katrina Orr what's up girl just wanted to let you know that I'm thinking of you and I want to get to know you, maybe we can start a friendship. so you can e-mail me at wildthang19@go.com

Hello to all you obsessed e-mailers out there! (just like me.) I'm a sixteen year old looking for new e-mail pals that are between the ages of 16_19,male/female doesn't matter!. So if anyone wants to write to me my e-mail ad is:hot_squaw@hotmail.com hopefully I'll be making new friends in the Cree communities! see-ya! p.s friendship satisfaction guaranteed! (ever sick!)

Hello there Cree Girls, my name is Oreah from Montreal, I am a female. I know that this is gonna sound weird, but lets try this once. Its a trivia, okay this is how it goes. Give me two names from each 9 Cree communities that you think is the cutest boys in the Cree Nation, I'll personally send you the results trough your email addresses by June 21, 2000. okay here is where you will email your trivia at: Oreah_2000babe@hotmail.com LETS TRY THIS FOR FUN GIRLS.

Looking for e-pals between the ages of 17-20 of the Cree nation male or female, it doesn't matter. I'm 17 soon to be 18. I like to meet new people. and looking forward to hearing from you lovely people! If you want to get to know me better! just write to me at friendly_2000_82@yahoo.com I'll be waiting!

LISTEN UP PEOPLE!!!! I would like to say Happy Easter to my family from Great Whale River, my grandparents, my uncles, my brothers, and my loving dad!!! My other family in Chisasibi, My grandparents, my aunties, my cousins, my uncles, and my loving mom!!! And to the cheezo family in Eastmain.... HAPPY EASTER TO YOU TOO... Love Always Andrea xox

SCF's seeking penpals, any gender between ages 22-30 of any community. We look forward to hearing from you so just email us to frisky_foxes@hotmail.com or write to frisky foxes C/O P.O.Box 263 Moosonee ON P0L-1Y0. Hope to hear from you soon, We'll write back ASAP.

Hi! We are looking for penpals of any age, male or female. We enjoy receiving and writing letters of the Cree Nation. We promise to rely ASAP. Please write to: Penpal, 244 Riverside Drive, Apt. # 202, Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 1H3

Anyone looking for penpals. Well here is your chance. E-mail me at:Lakiwa69@hotmail.com I'm from one of the 9 cree communities. I'm 17 years old/female. I'll be interested to hear anyone.It does'nt matter female or male. (any age). So i'll be looking forward to hear someone.

E-MAIL PALS WANTED:age doesn't matter,m/f? still doesn't matter. just e-mail me soon or when you can.i will answer every one of them. v_005@coolgroups.com

Seeking email pals between the ages of 17-23. male/female. Anyone would like to reply to me please email me at Glacier@hotmail.com. Hoping to hear from you soom. Peace.

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WOMEN2WOMEN

By Njan Matoush and Deantha Edmunds

Here it is... our long awaited follow-up to Between Friends. This time around we're bringing you stuff that really matters - to women! We rule. We rock. Let's hear it for the girls.

We had to do a lot of soul searching, inner questioning, basically, a lot of talk, to find just the right name for this new women's column in a very male-dominated Nation. Here are some of the names we considered, and why they were dumped. First of all, there are the weird ones that don't really apply to us, never mind that they're pretty offensive.

There was *Bitch Talk*, which comes on too strong, sounds too bitchy and we're not about that. Then there was *Woman on Woman*, which is way too sexual sounding and we don't want to go there. *That Time of the Month* and *Ragtime* were too graphic and don't exactly project the right image. *Shut Up and Listen* was another possibility, but we didn't want to come off as dominatrix and angry as we are in our private lives (naaah!).

Then there were the Native-ish ideas. *Squaw Speak* just didn't speak to us at all. Too racist. *Girls' Town* was too inner city gang-like. We're tough, but not THAT tough! *Rez Girl* just made us sound too much like a cheesy native superhero/sex symbol plus we don't live on the rez. *Buffy*? We love her, but we don't love her that much and enough already.

The Joy of Talk? This isn't a self-help, do-it-yourself manual. *Da Woman*? Too Puff Daddy-ish. *Do I Look Fat in This*? Do any of us really want to know?

Women Only didn't work. It was too sexist, and besides, we know some of you men are reading. *Women, She Wrote* was too Angela Lansbury, and she's not our type at all. Really, is she anybody's type? *Chick Chat* was too trite and cutesy. *Like, You Know* was too ditzy. *Girl Power*? Hey, we're Women.

Finally, we settled on Women2Women. It's catchy, classy, clever, cute. Just like us. (Ed. Note: Ever weesuckhdao. Naaaahh!) We tested it out at the office and people liked it. They really liked it! It's a keeper, they said.

So here we go... our very first column. We wanted to let you know about some of the issues we will cover in Women2Women, and get your feedback on them.

- Beauty and Hairstyles: of course! looking and feeling great
- Dream Interpretation: we'll find the deep, hidden meanings
- Boosting Self-Esteem: we could all use some of that
- Single Woman's Life: diary entries à la Bridget Jones (read it, it's hilarious!)
- Bringing Women Together: unique ways to bond
- Wedding/Baby Shower Ideas: games, gifts, themes
- Children and Learning: helping our kids, the world's greatest resource
- Mothers and Daughters: sharing stories, tears and laughs
- Improving Nutrition: eat healthier, feel better
- Testing New Products: freebies! we'll get what we can, and share the results with you
- Travelling: the ultimate Cree woman's road trip and more!
- Entertainment: Cyndi Lauper said it best, girls just wanna have fun. also movie, book and CD reviews
- Education: life lessons, reaching personal goals, schools and programs to consider
- Health: how to take care of yourself, the importance of a good doctor, pregnancy, breastfeeding, self breast examinations and yes, that time of the month
- Dealing With Abuse: finding your inner strenth and how to move forward in your life
- Relationships: how to argue constructively, differences between guys and girls, sex, all kinds of fun stuff
- Men: we could go on and on and on...

Feel free to send us any ideas or suggestions you have and we'll see what we can do.

If you want our advice on what's going on in your life, please write to us at:

Women2Women
c/o The Nation
5505 St. Laurent blvd, Suite 3018
Montreal, QC
H2T 1S6

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